

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2277

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8143

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG PFOR

SUBJECT: OPEC PRICE DECISION

REF: STATE 279392

1. I CALLED ON FONMIN PESANTES TODAY AND PRESENTED HIM WITH AN AIDE MEMOIRE ALONG THE LINES OF PARA 2-6 REFTTEL. I SUMMARIZED THE AIDE MEMOIRE AND ADDED THE POINT CONTAINED IN PARA 7.

2. THE MINISTER REPLIED THAT HE WOULD CONVEY THE VIEWS OF THE USG TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING GOE OIL POLICY. (I ASSUME HE MEANT THE SUPREME COUNCIL AND MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES, VARGAS.) HE ADDED THAT, WITHOUT ATTEMPTING TO PREDICT THE ECUADOREAN POSITION IN THE FORTHCOMING OPEC MEETING, ECUADOR IN THE PAST HAS GENERALLY TAKEN A MODERATE STANCE WITH REGARD TO PRICE INCREASES, IN SPITE OF ITS NEED FOR THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES. HE SAID THAT HE FELT SURE THAT THE DECISION OF THE GOE WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF ECUADOR'S RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES CONCERNED. PESANTES ALSO OBSERVED IN PASSING THAT ECUADOR WAS THE LEAST IMPORTANT PRODUCER IN OPEC.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PESANTES IS NOT A DECISION-MAKER WITH REGARD TO THE ISSUE OF OIL PRICE INCREASES, I FELT THAT I SHOULD CALL ON HIM FIRST IN ORDER TO GIVE THE PROPER DEGREE OF FORMALITY TO MY APPROACH AND TO UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE THE US ATTACHES TO THIS ISSUE. ALSO, I BELIEVE THAT THE FONMINISTRY WILL CONVEY OUR VIEWS TO

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SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVT WHEREAS I AM NOT SURE MINISTER OF

NATURAL RESOURCES WOULD. AT THE SAME TIME I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AT 3 PM TOMORROW (NOV. 18). HE WILL HAVE FINAL SAY WITH REGARD TO ECUADOR'S POSITION, SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY SUPREME COUNCIL.

4. I WILL REPORT THE RESULTS OF MY CONVERSATION WITH VARGAS IMMEDIATELY.
BLOOMFIELD

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION PER S/S-O, MR. MACFARLANE.

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